

A Sound Investment

For more than 40 years, the people who oversee and run King County's wastewater treatment utility have been committed to safely protecting and improving water quality. That commitment is reflected in the mission of the county's Wastewater Treatment Division: to protect public health and the environment by conveying, treating and reclaiming wastewater and its byproducts. Division employees plan, design, build and operate treatment facilities to clean wastewater before discharging it to Puget Sound.

To help keep our waters clean, the Wastewater Treatment Division, or WTD, also enforces regulations to reduce harmful waste discharged to the system. It educates the public and businesses about ways to reduce water pollution. And it makes treated organic waste into useful products, such as compost.

To the WTD, success means clean water. It means honoring a commitment to keeping our region a good place in which to live and work. Success means our beautiful environment is here for future generations to enjoy.

This report highlights the business we do—from controlling the sources of wastewater to collecting and treating wastewater to reusing its byproducts. This report also highlights the ways we do business—from increasing our productivity and responding to unanticipated events and emergencies, to moving toward sustainability and being a good neighbor.

Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow



In 1958, King County voters created the Wastewater Treatment Division's predecessor, the Municipality of Metropolitan Seattle, or Metro, to clean up Lake Washington and Elliott Bay. Our achievements since then are a national success story. We cleaned up Lake Washington with new sewage treatment facilities that eliminated most raw sewage discharges. We designed facilities to meet the future needs of a growing region.

In 1994, regional wastewater treatment became a responsibility of King County government. The WTD, no longer called Metro, is a division of the King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks. That department is also responsible for solid waste, water and land resources, and parks and recreation.

As the population has increased in our region, so have our responsibilities. We now treat wastewater for 16 cities, 16 sewer districts and more than 2 million people who live and work in King County, south Snohomish County and northeast Pierce County. Preventing water pollution is still the major focus of everything we do.

Of course, maintaining high water quality costs money. Our capital program includes the following: adding advanced treatment technology to our plants, reducing combined sewer overflows, and rehabilitating and upgrading our pump stations and piping systems. Our annual operating budget is about \$96 million, and our annual capital budget averages \$200 million.

LATEST ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In 2001-2002, the WTD continued to fulfill its primary mission: treating more than 200 million gallons of sewage a day. We also continued improving the system, increasing capacity to handle future demand and improving our business practices.

Beyond treating wastewater, **24** hours a day, **7** days a week, the utility is in the midst of carrying out a major initiative launched in 2000: its comprehensive plan for managing wastewater for the next 30 years.

The plan outlines in necessary improvements and expansion to deal with population growth in the WTD service area. Carrying out the plan will be expensive and difficult. But for the environment and future generations, the resulting clean water will have been a sound investment.

24/7

Partner
with 16 sewer
districts and 16
cities to serve
2 million
people.